

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. It is also blatant electioneering for George W. Bush. If they insist on doing this, they are violating their obligation to serve the public interest. They should be compelled to give equal time to the other side. They ought to follow the example of PBS whose "Frontline" presented biographies of both Kerry and Bush on Tues. 10/12. The program managed to be informative without smearing either candidate, which should be the rule rather than the exception.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.